AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-26. (canceled)

27. (previously presented) Installation for updating an address database with recorded address records, comprising:

- at least one processor (14, 15, 42) for receiving and processing address data as shown on items of post;

- a memory (22), connected to the at least one processor (14, 15, 42), for storing the address data;

- a database memory (44), connected to the at least one processor (14, 15, 42), containing the address database stored therein;

wherein

the at least one processor (14, 15, 42) is equipped to determine a quality rating for the address data on the basis of predefined criteria, the quality rating indicating how good the address data are, to compare the address data with the address records stored in the database memory (44), to update statistical data relating to said address records stored in said database memory (44), and to update the content of the database memory (44) on the basis of the quality rating, the comparison of the

address data with the stored address records, and said statistical data.

28. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 27, wherein said statistical data includes at least one of the group comprising:

- frequency with which an address record occurs per sorting center;

- dates on which an address record occurred on an item of post;

- interval between two successive times that an address record was used on an item of post;

- average length of time between two successive times that an address record was used on an item of post;

- sender's address data in relation to the address records.

29. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 27, wherein the at least one processor is equipped to determine a reliability rating for recognition of the address data and partly to base the quality rating on the reliability rating for recognition.

30. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 27, wherein the at least one processor is equipped to select name lines from the address data, to split the name lines into individual elements in accordance with predefined rules and

partly to base the quality rating on the selection of name lines and the splitting thereof.

31. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 30, further comprising stored common names, wherein the at least one processor is equipped to compare the individual elements of the name lines with the common names, to establish a commonness rating on the basis thereof and partly to base the quality rating on the commonness rating.

32. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 30, wherein the least one processor is equipped to derive a name for an addressee from the name lines, to derive an address for the addressee from the address data, to read registered names of persons residing at that address from the address database and to compare these with the name of the addressee and, on the basis of that comparison, to determine a comparison score per registered name, a comparison having a higher value the greater the degree of correspondence between the name of the addressee and a respective registered name.

33. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 32, wherein the at least one processor is equipped to determine that the address data are new if the comparison scores are relatively low and the quality rating is relatively high.

34. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 32, wherein the at least one processor is equipped to determine that the address data are known if the comparison

scores are relatively high and the quality rating is relatively high.

35. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 32, wherein the at least one processor is equipped to determine that the address data are unknown if the comparison scores are relatively low and the quality rating is relatively low.

36. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 33, wherein the at least one processor is equipped to generate an additional address record, containing the address data, in the address database if the address data are new.

37. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 36, wherein the at least one processor is equipped to record one of the following four statuses per address record:

    - status new, if the address record is generated;

    - status common, if the associated address data are received from different senders;

    - status reliable, if the associated address data are regularly read afresh;

    - status old, if the address record lapses.

38. (previously presented) Installation according to claim 27, wherein the address database is stored with security, such that either the data stored in the central database can be processed only via predefined rules or some of the data stored in the central database can be accessed via secure output routine.

39. (currently amended) Installation according to claim 27, further ~~comrpising~~ comprising post sorting units (26, 28) for automatic sorting of the items of post (1) making use of the address database.

40. (currently amended) Method for updating an address database in a database memory (44) containing recorded address records, comprising:

- receiving and processing address data as shown on items of post;

- storing the address data;

~~wherein~~

- ~~the determination of~~ determining a quality rating for the address data ~~is made~~ on the basis of predefined criteria, the quality rating indicating how good the address data are, ~~comparison of~~ comparing the address data with the address records stored in the database memory (44), updating statistical data relating to said address records stored in said database memory (44), and updating the content of the database memory (44) on the basis of the quality rating, ~~the comparison of~~ comparing the address data with the stored address records, and said statistical data.

41. (previously presented) Method according to claim 40, wherein said statistical data includes at least one of the group comprising:

- frequency with which an address record occurs per sorting center;

- dates on which an address record occurred on an item of post;

- interval between two successive times that an address record was used on an item of post;

- average length of time between two successive times that an address record was used on an item of post;

- sender's address data in relation to the address records.

42. (previously presented) method according to claim 40, further comprising the step of determining a reliability rating for recognition of the address data and partly basing the quality rating on the reliability rating for recognition.

43. (previously presented) Method according to claim 40, further comprising the steps of selecting name lines from the address data, splitting the name lines into individual elements in accordance with predefined rules and partly basing the quality rating on the selection of name lines and the splitting thereof.

44. (previously presented) Method according to claim 43, further comprising the steps of comparing the individual elements of the name lines with common names, establishing a commonness rating on the basis thereof and partly basing the quality rating on the commonness rating.

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45. (previously presented) Method according to claim 43, further comprising the steps of deriving a name for an addressee from the name lines, deriving an address for the addressee from the address data, reading registered names of persons residing at that address from the address database and comparing these with the name of the addressee and, on the basis of that comparison, determining a comparison score per registered name, a comparison score having a higher value the greater the degree of correspondence between the name of the addressee and a respective registered name.

46. (previously presented) Method according to claim 45, further comprising the step of determining that the address data are new if the comparison scores are relatively low and the quality rating is relatively high.

47. (previously presented) Method according to claim 45, further comprising the step of determining that the address data are known if the comparison scores are relatively high and the quality rating is relatively high.

48. (previously presented) Method according to claim 45, further comprising the step of determining that the address data are unknown if the comparison scores are relatively low and the quality rating is relatively low.

49. (previously presented) Method according to claim 46, further comprising the step of generating an additional

address record, containing the address data, in the address database if the address data are new.

50. (previously presented) Method according to claim 49, further comprising the step of recording one of the following four statuses per address record:

- status new, if the address record is generated;

- status common, if the associated address data are received from different senders;

- status reliable, if the associated address data are regularly read afresh;

- status old, if the address record lapses.

51. (previously presented) Method according to claim 40, wherein the address database is stored with security such that either the data stored in the central database can be processed only via predefined rules or some of the data stored in the central database can be accessed via a secure output routine.

52. (previously presented) Method according to claim 40, further comprising the step of sorting items of post (1) making use of the address database.

53. (currently amended) Data carrier provided with a computer program that can be read by a computer installation and, after having been loaded, provides the computer installation with the functionality for updating an address database in a database memory (44) containing recorded address records, making use of the following steps:

- receiving and processing address data as shown on items of post;

- storing the address data;

~~wherein~~

- ~~the determination of~~ determining a quality rating for the address data ~~is made~~ on the basis of predefined criteria, the quality rating indicating how good the address data area, ~~comparison of~~ comparing the address data with the address records stored in the database memory (44), updating statistical data relating to said address records stored in said database memory (44), and updating the content of the database memory (44) on the basis of the quality rating, ~~the comparison of~~ comparing the address data with the stored address records, and said statistical data.

54. (currently amended) Computer program that can be read by a computer installation and, after having been loaded, provides the computer installation with the functionality for updating an address database in a database memory (44) containing recorded address records, making use of the following steps:

- receiving and processing address data as shown on items of post;

- storing the address data;

~~wherein~~

- ~~the determination of~~ determining a quality rating for the address data ~~is made~~ on the basis of predefined criteria, the

quality rating indicating how good the address data are, ~~comparison of~~ <u>comparing</u> the address data with the address records stored in the database memory (44), updating statistical data relating to said address records stored in said database memory (44), and updating the content of the database memory (44) on the basis of the quality rating, ~~the comparison of~~ <u>comparing</u> the address data with the stored address records, and said statistical data.